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Viewing cable 05DOHA1779, QATARIS SEE TRUTH IN MEHLIS REPORT BUT ARE CAUTIOUS

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#05DOHA1779**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
05DOHA1779	2005-10-24 13:37	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Doha

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16545>
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16461>
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16545>
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16546>
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16605>
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<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16644>
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16645>

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 001779

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/23/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SY](#) [LE](#) [QA](#)

SUBJECT: QATARIS SEE TRUTH IN MEHLIS REPORT BUT ARE CAUTIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Chase Untermeyer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary. Qataris and resident non-Qatari Arabs (largely Palestinians, Jordanians, and Egyptians) are generally of the view that the Mehlis report on the Hariri assassination is credible but should not be used as a justification to use force against Syria. Qataris and non-Qatari Arabs hold similar views. There has been no public comment by the GOQ. The Amir, in a family dinner with the Ambassador October 21, did not defend Syrian President Bashar al-Asad as he had done previously, but he warned against U.S. military action. End Summary.

2. (C) Qataris and non-Qatari resident Arabs believe the Mehlis report on the assassination of ex-Lebanese PM Rafiq al-Hariri is broadly accurate. There has been some questioning of how high the assassination conspiracy reached -- whether to the Syrian president's cohorts or to the president himself. Some contacts have said privately that such a thing cannot happen "in an Arab government such as we have throughout the region" without the highest level of approval.

3. (C) While accepting the general truth of the report, the Arab community remains skeptical about its accuracy of its details. They characterize it as a preliminary report that was completed rapidly and is not a final account. Many of these private commentators see the need for a more thorough, final investigation. Almost all share the view that the Mehlis report should not be used alone as a justification for a "judgment" against Syria.

4. (C) Viewing the report more negatively are those who see it as a tool of the U.S. against Syria. They believe the U.S. position is based on a desire to break Syria and does not reflect a concern for the Lebanese people, as U.S. officials have stated. Balancing this more critical view are those who say that the report, by putting pressure on Bashar al-Asad, gives him an opportunity to "clean house" of senior Baath party officials who are pursuing their own agendas.

5. (C) In a family dinner with the Ambassador October 21, the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, did not come to the defense of al-Asad. In the past, when asked about Syria in meetings with U.S. officials, the Amir has vigorously defended al-Asad, calling him someone the U.S. should cultivate and support against "his father's cronies." The Amir's rambling reply was essentially recognition that dad and junior shared the same cronies. The Amir said the U.S. would do itself great harm by intervening in Syria, but later he said he sees no likelihood of such intervention.

6. (C) Background and Comment. Senior Qatari officials have been meeting with Syrian counterparts over the past year, presumably to play an intermediary role with respect to Lebanon and the U.S. Most significantly, President al-Asad spent approximately six hours privately with the Amir in July of this year. Cementing the political efforts, Qatar signed a memorandum the same month to establish an investment company capitalized at \$100 million to channel investments to Syria. With the Mehlis report fingering the Syrian government, Qatar's efforts at private diplomacy may have been derailed and their role on the UN Security Council -- with its enforcement role -- will come to the forefront.

UNTERMEYER